

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for preparing an intervertebral space for implantation of an artificial intervertebral disc therein, the apparatus comprising:

first and second apparatus baseplates integrally coupled to a trunk extending between the first and second apparatus baseplates, wherein the first and second apparatus baseplates and the trunk form a ~~unitary~~monolithic, solid structure;

each apparatus baseplate having inwardly and outwardly facing surfaces, the inwardly facing surfaces facing each other and the outwardly facing surfaces each approximating a contour of a corresponding outwardly facing surface of a disc baseplate of the artificial intervertebral disc;

at least one of the apparatus baseplates having a plurality of engagement holes extending into the inwardly facing surface of at least one of the apparatus baseplates in a direction substantially perpendicular to each of a plurality of [[a]] surgical approach directions used to insert the apparatus into the intervertebral space; and

each of the plurality of engagement holes being disposed on the at least one of the apparatus baseplates to correspond to a respective one of the surgical approach directions such that selection for use of one of the plurality of engagement holes corresponds to selection of the respective surgical approach,

wherein each baseplate comprises an anteriorly facing surface extending perpendicular to the anterior surgical approach direction, and two antero-laterally facing surfaces each extending at an angle from the anteriorly facing surface and each extending perpendicular to a respective one of the anterior-lateral surgical approach directions, the anteriorly facing surface being between the two anterior-laterally facing surfaces.

2. (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the contour includes a dome.

3. (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the apparatus baseplates are angled with respect to one another at an apparatus baseplate angle of lordosis approximating a preferred angle of lordosis at which the disc baseplates are held during implantation of the disc.

4. (original) An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein the preferred angle of lordosis is approximately 15 degrees.

5. (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the trunk is cylindrical.

6. (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the baseplates and the trunk are configured to form a groove.

7. (original) The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the groove is annular.

8. (original) The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein a floor of the groove is narrower than an opening of the groove.

9. (original) The apparatus according to claim 6, wherein a floor of the groove is ridged.

10. (original) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein at least one of the surgical approach directions is one of an anterior surgical approach direction and an anterior-lateral surgical approach direction.

11. (original) The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the surgical approach directions include an anterior surgical approach direction and two anterior-lateral surgical approach directions, the anterior-lateral surgical approach directions being substantially symmetrical with respect to one another about the anterior surgical approach direction.

12. (canceled)

13. (previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein each of the anteriorly facing surfaces is angled at approximately 33.4 degrees with respect to each of the anterior-laterally facing surfaces.

14. (canceled)

15. (original) A set of apparatuses according to claim 1, wherein each of the apparatuses has a combination of width and depth dimensions different from each other of the apparatuses.

16. (original) The set of apparatuses according to claim 15, wherein the width dimension is a range of 35 mm to 40 mm inclusively.

17. (original) The set of apparatuses according to claim 15, wherein the depth dimension is in a range of 14 mm to 18 mm inclusively.

18. (currently amended) An apparatus for preparing an intervertebral space for implantation of an artificial intervertebral disc therein, the apparatus comprising:

first and second apparatus baseplates integrally coupled to a trunk extending between the first and second apparatus baseplates, wherein the first and second apparatus baseplates and the trunk form a ~~unitary~~monolithic, solid structure;

each apparatus baseplate having inwardly and outwardly facing surfaces, the inwardly facing surfaces facing each other and the outwardly facing surfaces each approximating a contour of a corresponding outwardly facing surface of a disc baseplate of the artificial intervertebral disc;

at least one of the apparatus baseplates having a plurality of engagement holes extending into the inwardly facing surface of at least one of the apparatus baseplates in a direction substantially perpendicular to each of a plurality of surgical approach directions used to insert the apparatus into the intervertebral space; and

the plurality of engagement holes being disposed in pairs on the at least one of the apparatus baseplates, each of the pairs corresponding to a respective one of the surgical approach directions such that selection for use of one of the pairs of engagement holes corresponds to selection of the respective surgical approach,

wherein the surgical approach directions include an anterior surgical approach direction and two anterior-lateral surgical approach directions, the anterior-lateral surgical approach directions being substantially symmetrical with respect to one another about the anterior surgical approach direction, and wherein each baseplate comprises an anteriorly facing surface extending perpendicular to the anterior surgical approach direction, and two antero-laterally facing surfaces each extending at an angle from the anteriorly facing surface and each extending perpendicular to a respective one of the anterior-lateral surgical approach directions, the anteriorly

facing surface being between the two anterior-laterally facing surfaces.

19. (canceled)

20. (previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the anteriorly facing surface and each of the anterior-laterally facing surfaces has a respective one of the hole pairs spaced inwardly therefrom.